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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests a new way to approach the study style in instructional communication. First, the paper reviews and critiques existing approaches to communication style research. Following that it is suggested that a fundamental limitation of existitng approaches is that researchers have typically superimposed conventional criteria for teaching effectiveness and taxonomies of style upon teachers and students. Then, a basic outline for a constructivist approach to style in classroom communication is advanced. It is suggested that this paper is the first to adapt the concept of message design logics to extend the understanding of instructional communication, more specifically to understand how teachers' orientations to communication and their resultant behavior affects students development in the pursuit of educational goals. The paper offers the following preliminary taxonomy for teacher's and students' communicating styles: (1) expressive teachers would strive for completeness and clarity in expressing course content; (2) conventional teachers would strive for cooperative classroom interaction guided by the rules, as of their discipline; (3) rhetorical teachers would seek to influence their students toward their course-related views of reality through coherent argumentation; (4) expressive students expect to learn what is taught and demonstrate learning by clearly and completely reproducing that material; (5) conventional students expect to learn and play a "game" with fixed rules and to do well by demonstrating that they can play by the rules; and (6) rhetorical students recognize the possibility of transcending or transforming conventional "games" through creative classroom communication. An 8-page bibliography is attached. (Author/TD)

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Classroom Communicating Style in Higher Education:

A Reformulation Based upon "Neo-constructivist" Theory

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ABSTRACT

This paper suggests a new way to approach the study style in instructional communication. First, existing approaches to communication style research are reviewed and critiqued. It is suggested that a fundamental limitation of existing approaches is that researchers have typically superimposed conventional criteria for teaching effectiveness and taxonomies of style upon teachers and students. Therefore, their investigations may have missed crucial associations and distinctions made by students and teachers interacting in educational contexts. Then, a basic outline for a constructivist--or, perhaps more precisely, neoconstructivist-- approach to style in classroom communication is advanced. This approach represents a reformulation of earlier work through the incorporation of O'Keefe's (1988) idea of "message design logics."

It is believed that this paper is the first to adapt the concept of message design logics to extend our understanding of instructional communication, more specifically to understand how teachers' orientations to communication and their resultant behavior affects students development in the pursuit of educational goals. It offers the following preliminary taxomony for teacher's communicating styles:

1) Expressive teachers would strive for completeness and clarity in expressing course content.
2) Conventional teachers would strive for cooperative classroom interaction guided by the rules, as they see them, of their discipline.
3) Rhetorical teachers would seek to influence their students toward their course-related views of reality through coherent argumentation.

It also offers the following preliminary taxonomy for students' communicating styles:

1) Expressive students expect to learn what is taught and demonstrate learning by clearly and completely reproducing that material.
2) Conventional students expect to learn and play a "game" with fixed rules and to do well by demonstrating that they can play by the rules.
3) Rhetorical students recognize the possibility of transcending or transforming conventional "games" through creative classroom communication.

Two years ago, a project was envisioned which would have focused on the communicating styles of three prize-winning university teachers and would have sought to understand how those teachers developed and presented instructional messages. The idea for the study grew out of the researcher's interest in previous work on the communication style of teachers and her desire to build upon that work by adopting a constructivist research perspective which would consider not only how teachers act but also how they decide how to act. The goal was to develop clear, rich descriptions of exemplary teaching behavior based upon data from three sources: the teachers, their students, and the researcher's classroom observations.

However, after the theoretical basis for such a study was developed but before data collection began, B. O'Keefe (1988) published a groundbreaking article introducing the idea of "message design logics" which served as a catalyst for the reformulation of the theory and, subsequently, the project. Whereas earlier constructivist research had sought to understand relationships between differences in communicative development and competence in perspective-taking and audience adaptation, this article introduced a new analytical focus. The new focus was upon individual differences in the number and kinds of goals pursued in a communication situation and in the development and enactment of communicative behavior to achieve those

goals.

After reading that article, the researcher realized that gathering data about three teachers and their teaching behavior from more than two hundred students, likely to differ from one another in communicative development, could contribute to our understanding of not only of individual teachers as sources of instructional messages but of individual students as recipients of those messages. Since the researcher views teaching as "communicating with students in pursuit of educational goals" [1], this approach was immediately attractive.

Teaching always involves a process of communicating with students to help those students achieve educational goals. To study teaching is to study relationships between communication processes and learning outcomes. Applegate (1980) observed, further, that teachers are important agents of socialization and that differences in their orientations to communication could be expected to affect the social and communicative development of their students.

O'Keefe (1988) strongly suggests that teachers' orientations to communication are likely to differ. She describes, theoretically, three distinct orientations to communication that she labels "message design logics." Message design logics are defined as "process[es] of practical reasoning used to derive messages that serve goals" (p.71). O'Keefe explains:

"Communication is not necessarliy a uniform process. It can be constituted differently, being used in fundamentally different ways by those who employ different message design logics; thus, it is possible for the facts about how communication works to be systematically different for different people" (p. 89).

O'Keefe and Delia (1988) conclude that a pattern of individual differences across communicative tasks, media, and educational levels (e.g., Applegate, 1980; Burleson, 1984; Kline and Ceropski, 1984; O'Keefe and Delia, 1979) suggests that at least some individual differences in message production and comprehension originates in the ways individuals learn to use communication, regardless of the specific form that communication might take" (p. 70).

However, it is believed that this paper is the first to adapt the concept of message design logics to extend our understanding of instructional communication, more specifically to understand how teachers' orientations to communication and their resultant behavior affects students development in the pursuit of educational goals. As such, it represents a new approach to developing evaluative criteria essential to instructional improvement in higher education.

Over the last decade, many communication scholars have called for research to develop specific criteria by which to evaluate the quality of instructional communication (e.g., Andersen, 1979; Kearney and

McCroskey, 1980; Andriate, 1982). Some progress has been made toward this goal. For example, Norton found evidence of a relationship between a teacher's effectiveness and that teacher's "communicator style" (Norton, 1977, 1983). More specifically, he found evidence that more effective teachers have communication styles characteristically and predictably different from those of less effective teachers. However, other research suggests that different communication styles may be effective in different types of courses (Kearney, Plax, and Wendt-Wasco, 1985).

While it seems that a teacher's communication style makes an important contribution to the quality of instructional communication, we need a richer understanding of how a teacher's communication style may be described and evaluated. This paper suggests a new way to approach the study of style in instructional communication. First, existing approaches to communication style research are reviewed and critiqued. Then, a basic outline for a constructivist--or, perhaps more precisely, neoconstructivist-- approach to style in classroom communication is advanced. This approach represents a reformulation of earlier work through the incorporation of the idea of "message design logics."

A Brief Critical Review of Existing Approaches to Communication Style

Communication style research by Norton and associates (See, for example: Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum, 1981;

Norton, 1977, 1983; Norton and Nussbaum, 1980; Nussbaum and Scott, 1979, 1980; Scott and Nussbaum; 1979, 1981; Nussbaum, 1983; and McDonald, 1987) as well as that by Kearney-Knutson and McCroskey (Kearney-Knutson, 1979; Kearney and McCroskey, 1980) use Likert-type scales to record assessments of communication style. Among the findings of these studies are that "good" teachers have styles that are more dramatic, impression leaving, relaxed, attentive, friendly, and open than the styles of other teachers (Norton, 1977, 1983; Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum, 1981). Additionally, Anderson and associates (Andersen, 1979; Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum, 1981). found that "good" teachers exhibit "immediacy" behaviors, which involve "decreasing actual physical distance or psychological distance" and "reflect a ...positive orientation of the communicator towards the receiver" (Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum, 1981 p. 377). Teacher-student solidarity was also found to characterize the classes of positively perceived teachers (Nussbaum and Scott, 1979; Andersen, Norton, and Nussbaum, 1981). And, a "successful" teacher was found to be not rigid but rather high in responsiveness, high in general interpersonal skills (or consideration) and assertive in initiating class structure (Kearney-Knutson, 1979; Kearney and McCroskey, 1980). However, these approaches to communication style exhibit certain characteristic limitations.

First, acknowledgement of differences in the meaning of behavior in different contexts or for different participants is lacking or limited. Norton's CSM is intended to be an all-purpose instrument to be used in a variety of communication contexts. It, therefore, fails to acknowledge that contextual differences may be meaningful to participants. In contrast, Kearney-Knutson's measure of Teacher Communication Style (TCS) was developed specifically for instructional communication research. However, it was developed using a domain sampling method (Nunally, 1967) similar to Norton's and shares some of the problems of his approach. It neither allows individuals to register reactions to the salience of items on the instrument nor reflects individual differences in perception or interpretation. These "selectionist" approaches ask students to recall and to assess teacher behaviors and personal qualities which the researchers have decided are important. Items selected for inclusion on the instruments, drawn from reviews of research, may not be those actually attended to by (at least some) participants in actual, situated interaction. And, some items on these instruments may be perceived by (at least some) participants as irrelevant to the task of meaningfully describing specific instructional contexts. For example, Cronkite and Liska (1976) found that respondants considered many of the items on a speaker credibility measure irrelevant to the task of assessing

credibility. And, more recently, this complaint was found in the student press:

> Each and every semester, students are given the opportunity to evaluate their professors and teaching assistants using a generalized form. For the past several years, the effectiveness of this form has come under attack....The present form contains many questions that are inapplicable to many courses.... ♠

Second, the wording of the items on these instruments makes differences in interpretations seem likely. As Street (1988) points out, these measures usually use items addressing behavioral inferences rather than actual observable behaviors. For example, such measures often fail to specify which observable behaviors should count in evaluating a teacher as being "shy" or "enjoying a challenge". Substantial individual differences may exist in interpretation of behaviors. Whereas one person could attribute observable behaviors to "shyness", for example, others could attribute them to "aloofness" or "apathy." However, while differences in interpretation are not ruled out, the measurement technique used preclude discovery of such differences.

Third, even if existing studies have achieved clear delineations of teacher communication style in the specific settings studied (usually communication classes), one should not assume that it is appropriate to generalize the findings or to use the instruments that were used to

gather data to other educational settings. In fact, there is some evidence that students in different disciplines use different criteria to judge teaching effectiveness (Kearney, Plax, and Wendt-Wasco, 1985). In that study, students in an accounting class were less likely to be aware of teacher immediacy behaviors than students in a communication class.

There are at least two possible ways to interpret this difference. First, as the authors suggest, students in the communication class may have been explicitly taught about the dimension of teacher immediacy while the students in the accounting class were not. Second, students might consider "immediacy" to be an important attribute for a communication teacher to demonstrate but not neccessary or even desirable for an accounting teacher. What students hope to achieve in a communication class may seem to them to depend more on teacher immediacy than what they hope to accomplish in an accounting class. The implication is that students' goals may need to be considered in attempts to understand their perceptions of a teacher's communication style.

Fourth, the interaction between teacher and student is "not strongly stressed in communication style research" (Cocetti, 1985); instead, the teacher is seen as the active "communicator" and the student as a passive recipient.

Stephen and Harrison take another approach to

communication style research (Stephen, 1985; Harrison, Pistolessi, and Stephen, 1986; Harrison, Stephen and Pistolessi, 1986; Stephen and Harrison, 1986). They have developed the Communicator Style Q-Set, a deck of 100 cards, used by respondents employing a forces choice sorting procedure to describe the communicating style of a target communicator. From the constructivist perspective adopted for this research, this approach to measurement-- while still selectionist-- has advantages over those described above. First, the CSQS reduces the possibility of differences in interpretation by more often specifying observable behaviors. It also grants respondents a limited opportunity to comment on the relevance of the items because items irrelevant or foreign to the experience of respondents are likely to be placed in the central stacks of the sort. However, it also may significantly limit the ability of respondents to describe communication style as they perceive it. While pre-testing of the instrument allowed respondents to suggest additional items for the Q-set, which would allow them more adequately to describe the behavior of the target communicator, it is unclear how these respondents would have freely encoded descriptions of communication style. They might have included other items, considered more or fewer than 100 total items, or shaped their responses in a distribution other than the quasi-normal curve the sorting procedure mandates.

Still another approach to measurement of

communication style, a behavioral approach, has been described by Street (1988). Although this approach does not seem to have been used in instructional communication research, it will be dealt with here briefly in order to distinguish it from the approach proposed by this paper. A behavioral approach to communication style typically takes note of units such as the rate (frequency) and duration of particular verbal, vocal, and nonverbal behavior and describes an interactant's score in terms of such units.

Street reports that a behavioral approach to measurement reflects a research trend "away from the study of self-reported or single-event behaviors and....more interested in verbal, vocal, and kinesic patterns evolving during the course of social interaction and the functional impact of the behavioral array" (p. 144). Street also notes that most style research which takes a behavioral approach is concerned with mutual influence among communicative behavior rather than being source-focused as are the approaches reviewed earlier.

Street is concerned with the problem with drawing generalizations from research devoted to behavioral measurement of interactive style because of incomensurable units of analysis chosen by researchers. However, from the perspective adopted for this project, another issue worthy of consideration is whether or not the units researchers choose reflect the units that are meaningful to the

interactants they have studied.

While the transactional study of communication style seems more appropriate to the nature of instructional communication than a strictly teacher-focused study, researcher selection of units for analysis seems to have limited behavioral measurement approaches in ways that parallel the ways researcher selection of items for self report instruments has limited the approaches described earlier. In sum, although it seems that communication style is important to consider when assessing instructional communication, existing approaches to style place constraints on the ability of individuals to create style descriptions isomorphic with their social perceptions. From the theoretical perspective developed in the following section of this report, those constraints may be counter-productive.

Classroom Communicating Style in Higher Education: A Neo-constructivist Approach

In approaching the study of speech communication, constructivist researchers seek not only to describe how people behave but also to understand the processes through which people decide how to act. O'Keefe and Delia (1985) explain that constructivism grows out of symbolic interactionism but modifies the sociological interactionist foci (act-specific and situation-specific processes) by highlighting "individual stabilities in social-cognitive and behavioral aspects of communication"

(p. 55). This modification is accomplished by integrating the perspective of symbolic interactionists such as Blumer (1969) with Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs and aspects of Werner's (1957; Wapner, Kaplan & Cohen, 1973) organismic-developmental theory. Kelly's personal construct theory contributes the idea that "individuals channel social perceptions through stable interpretive schemas" which they bring to interactive situations rather than "constructing every situation from the ground up" (O'Keefe and Delia, 1985, p. 58). Werner's theory provides a developmental perspective within which interpretive schemas continue to evolve over the course of an individual's life "from a state of relative globality and lack of differentiation to states of increasing differentiation, articulation, and hierarchic integration" (Werner, 1957, p. 126).

One constructivist approach to style in speech communication, then, would explore how, for individual human beings, cognitive principles interact with communication contexts resulting in observable styles of performance. This would be a performer-centered approach to style. Another approach to style, consistent with constructivist assumptions, would be to explore how the performance style of individuals impresses those who observe it. That would be an observer-centered approach. A third approach would be to combine performer-centered and observer-centered approaches to style-- attending not

only to ways the cognitive development of performers influences how they behave but also to ways the cognitive development of observers influences their impressions of those performers' behavior.

When describing continuous processes that lead to outcomes, it seems more precise to use the gerund form. Weick (1959) used the gerund "organizing" to describe how people create organizations through continuous processes. Similarly, the essential dynamism of the highest echelon of Maslow's hierarchy (1954) is effectively communicated through the gerund "self-actualizing." A person is self-actualizing when engaged in a process of striving to become "the best" he or she can be. A third example consistent with this approach is the use of the term "sciencing" to describe scientific activity as "a set of processes" (Rubinstein, Laughlin, and McManus, 1984). Therefore, "style of communicating," or the less unwieldly "communicating style," seems an appropriate label for a construct denoting how a person uses his or her behavioral repertoire in the process of communication. Communicating style will sometimes be abbreviated CS.

Communicating style is defined as how an individual uses his or her behavioral repertoire while communicating. Developing a style of communicating involves acquiring and using meaningful codes for interpreting social perceptions as well as for interacting. An individual's behavioral repertoire (communicative repertoire) consists of all the

behaviors and behavioral patterns a person enacts from the infinite behavioral array available to human beings. A person develops and uses his or her behavioral repertoire in conjunction with the development and use of an interpretive repertoire that Kelly (1955) has called a "personal construct system." A personal construct is a conscious or tacit basis used by an individual to compare or contrast objects. A system of personal constructs is developed, reapplied, and altered to organize behavior. It provides bases for decisions about how to act.

Constructivist research prior to the mid 1980's focused on exploring differences in communicative development. Development of interpersonal construct systems were shown to progress toward more differentiation, abstractness, integration, and articulation. Differences in communicative competence were explored through assessing developmental differences and the impact of such differences upon social perspective-taking and audience adaptation. (See, for example, Delia and Clark, 1977; Delia and O'Keefe, 1979; O'Keefe and Delia, 1979; Ritter, 1979.) However, more recently, O'Keefe and Delia (1988) report rejection of that approach "in preference to a view of message production as a process of practical reasoning used to derive messages that serve goals" (p. 71).

The concept that behavior is goal-driven has always been central to constructivism, which is rooted in

organismic-developmental theory. Wapner, Kaplan, and Cohen (1973) explicitly address this topic:

> THe organismic approach is frankly teleological ....There can be no action in our terminology without an agent and without imputed goals of an agent (pp. 265-275).

What is new to constructivism is the introduction of the idea that a variety of "message design logics" (O'Keefe, 1988) may be used in the process of pursuing goals through communication. A "message design logic" is a practical reasoning process "used to derive messages that serve goals" (O'Keefe and Delia, 1988, p. 71) and three logics (expressive, conventional and rhetorical) have been described (O'Keefe, 1988; O'Keefe and Delia, 1988). O'Keefe writes:

> In order to reason from goals to messages, the analyst (like the producer) must have a theory of communication that specifies how verbal means can be used to achieve practical goals. If one can specify a set of communication-theoretic premises about how to formulate meaningful expressions in context, what sorts of effects one can achieve with communication, and how one goes about achieving those effects, then one can use those premises to deduce a verbal course of action to achieve any set of goals.(p. 83)

Premises about what matters or counts in communication also adapt listening, message reception and

processing to achieve goals. O'Keefe observes:

> [as] a message producer must have some process or principle that is used in constructing the verbal expressions that will serve goals, a message receiver must have some process or principle that is used in guiding the inference made from message to message intention. (p.96)

When considering style in classroom interaction, it seems important to state explicitly that even in a classic lecture format teachers communicate <u>with</u> students. Students are active participants in communication when they observe the lecturer or listen to, react to, and take notes on the lecture. Indeed, these communicators may also be said have communicating styles. The teacher may or may not notice the behavior students enact in this role, but their behavior is all potentially communicative.

While O'Keefe (1988) charts the three message design logics she has identified (expressive, conventional, rhetorical) in terms of eight characteristics, contrasting the first two characteristics provide a useful introduction to the application of her idea to instructinal communication:

The expressive premise is that language is a medium for expressing thoughts and feelings and the central dimension of communicative evaluation (communicative success) is clarity of expression characterized by openness, honesty and unimpeded signaling. Successful

communicators say what they think unimpeded by "noise". This definition of communication results in a model similar to the "shotgun model" of effective speaking found in a variety of basic public speaking texts (See, for example, Lucas, 1986. p. 19). One applying this model to instructional communication presumes instructor knowledge and demands clear expression of that knowledge to achieve effectiveness. For an expressive student, a successful teacher would achieve clarity in expression of course material, allowing a good notetaker, who studies well, to succeed.

The conventional premise is that communication is a game played cooperatively by social rules. Success in communication, predicated upon that premise, involves appropriateness, control of resources, and cooperativeness. A student may expect role appropriate behavior from the teacher (e.g., fairness of evaluation, clear definition of the rules that will be in effect) and may expect to succeed though resoucefulness and cooperatively following the rules. For a conventional student, a successful teacher would be characterized by role appropriateness (professionalism) and adequate resouces (subject matter knowledge and communicative competence) enabling a competent, cooperative student to succeed. A conventional approach is consistent with game theory. (See, for example, Davis, 1970.)

The rhetorical premise is that communication is the

creation and negotiation of social selves and situations and its success is subject to judgement by no external criterion but only by "smooth and coherent communication." Rhetorical teachers can be expected to design their roles and to seek acceptance of their views of reality. Such teachers would be successful when students "buy what they are selling," definitions of the situation and the roles available therein, as well as a shared drama in which to play those roles. A sucessful student would actively participate in and help to shape the evolving drama. For a rhetorical student, a successful teacher would use smooth and coherent instructional communication which would enable a student to succeed through coordination and negotiation with the teacher. Constructivism is a rhetorical approach to communication.

This theory of CS is guided by the constructivist tradition of research, a "recognizably rhetorical" tradition (O'Keefe, 1988. p.98)--a tradition out of which evolved the message design logic model, a theoretical model of communication theories. An important implication of this theoretical model is that one can take a constructivist perspective but acknowledge that those being studied may be neither "naive" nor conscious constructivists.

O'Keefe argues that the three alternative message design logics form a natural developmental progression, with the mechanism of development being the progressive

accumulation and integration of information about communication. Thus, an expressive logic comes first; a person acquires the principle that there can be direct correspondance between semantic intention and verbal expression. Next, socialization into any system of conventional rights and obligations encourages spontaneous expression to be replaced by the expression required for conventionally defined actions. The abilty to transcend convention involves an abstract sense of communicating as a process not merely responsive to situations by constitutive of the situation.

To be consistent with its roots in the organismic-developmental approach, such a progression would not involve the permanent adoption of the most recently acquired logic. Rather, it would enable developmentally advanced message designers to be "more flexible and free" in their "transactions with the environment", having acquired the ability to shift from one logic to another voluntarily (Wapner, Kaplan, and Cohen, 1973, p. 277).

O'Keefe's model, including its developmental assumptions, seems to have intriguing implications for the study of style in instructional communication. The central implications are these: CS, in teachers and in students, may be be ordered developmentally from expressive, to conventional, to rhetorical; and a rhetorical communicating style in a teacher may be especially effective in facilitating students'

communicative development.

Teachers and their students presumably could employ any of the three message design logics. Each logic, as discussed earlier, would be related to different premises concerning what may be accomplished communicatively. In a teacher-centered classroom, such as a large college class tends to be, the teacher's orientation to communication (message design logic) might be expected to influence students' communicative development in a variety of ways, for example:

1. Students in a conventionally taught class-- where "power and resource control" are used to designate roles, rules, and relationships-- "would find it difficult to develop a belief in the social constitution of reality and the power of language to reorder social life"
2. In constrast, "to the extent that negotiability" (for example, the use and acceptance of argumentation) "is a clear possibility, [students] will come more quickly to a rhetorical view of communication" (See O'Keefe, 1988, p.89).

Communication is always situated and communicating style needs to be observed in context. In studying communicating style in any context or situation, attention needs to be given (1) to the character of the interpretive and behavioral repertoires of individuals, (2) to

understandings which evolve through interaction (e.g., understandings about interactive roles, relationships, and goals that are appropriate to that context or situation). For example, when studying the communicating styles of individuals interacting in instructional environments, such as college or university classrooms, we need to consider the underlying communicative competencies of the individual actors (students and teachers), the shared and differing communicative expectations they bring to class with them (message design logics and goal structures) and their on-going negotiation of situation-specific roles, relationships, and identities.

When we study the communicating style of a teacher, we study the style of a unique individual who is also an important agent of socialization. Differences in teachers' styles of communicating should be expected to affect the social and communicative development of their students.

A tentative taxonomy of teachers' communicating styles based upon O'Keefe's model of message design logics follows:

1) Expressive teachers would strive for completeness and clarity in expressing course content.
2) Conventional teachers would strive for cooperative classroom interaction guided by the rules, as they perceive them, of their discipline.
3) Rhetorical teachers would seek to influence their

students toward their course-related views of reality through coherent argumentation.

It is important to consider, too, that the students who teachers encounter have communicating styles of their own (expressive, conventional, and rhetorical). They use their behavioral repertoires in classroom communication based on their goal-driven interpretations of their teacher's instructional messages.

1) Expressive students expect to learn what is taught and demonstrate learning by clearly and completely reproducing that material.
2) Conventional students expect to learn and play a "game" with fixed rules and to do well by demonstrating that they can play by the rules.
3) Rhetorical students recognize the possibility of transcending or transforming conventional "games" through creative classroom communication.

Allan Bloom (1987) wrote in his Closing of the American Mind:

> [A] real teacher['s] task [is] to assist pupils to fulfill human nature against all the deforming forces of convention and prejudice.... Moreover, there is no real teacher who does not believe in the soul or in a magic that acts on it through speech (p. 20).

Whether we view the development as occuring in soul, mind, or elsewhere there can be little doubt that a

teacher's speech affects students' development in fundamental ways. Improving the quality of teaching should, therefore, be a be a fundamental concern of the discipline of speech communication.

Bloom's claims related to teaching are more meaningful when taken in the context of much earlier claims by Plato, in the Phaedrus. In the Phaedrus dialogue, instruction is given on the art and science of influencing others. It says that one who seeks to influence (and teach others to influence) should have a genius for speaking and add to it science and practice. Furthermore, one should understand the character of each of the souls in the perspective audience, before attempting to persuade them.

A study of classroom communicating style that takes into account both teacher's and students' goal-driven interpretations and behavior could explore a rich variety of research questions, in the pursuit of teaching excellence, for example:

1. How do exemplary college/university teachers communicate with the students in their classes? (How do they design and deliver instructional messages?)
2. What constructs do college students apply to construing teaching behavior and patterns of behavior (teacher communicating style)?
3. How do students differ with respect to the number

and kinds of constructs they use for construing teacher communicating style?

4. How do the reasons students take the course and their own personal goals, objectives, and expectations for the course relate to their standards for teacher behavior (communication)?
5. How do students' course-specific educational goals, objectives, and expectations evolve over the course of the semester?
6. How do students descriptions of their goal structures relate to their written impressions of teachers?
7. How do students' perceptions of their accomplishments by the end of a course relate to their initial and midterm goals?
8. How do students' perceptions of their accomplishments by the end of the course relate to their written impressions of their teacher?
9. How congruent are the teachers goals with students' goals at the beginning and middle of the semester and their perceptions of accomplishments at the semester's end?
10. What factors--in addition to the teacher--do students credit with contributing to their class accomplishments? What, if any, relationship is there between the factors listed, students' goals structures, and constructs used in explaining

teacher behavior?

This researcher is currently preparing a report based on a case study which explored several of those questions.

Endnotes

1. The rationale for this definition is developed in a paper [the this author] entitled: Communicating Style: A New Theoretical Approach to Instructional Communication in Higher Education. It was presented at the Eastern Communication Convention in Ocean City, Maryland, May 1989. It has been accepted for inclusion in the ERIC database.

2. The "earlier work" referred to is the paper described above.

3. The term "selectionist" is a self-description used in a an article by Sorensen, Plax, and Kearney (1989). See BIBLIOGRAPHY for complete reference.

4. The Integrator, Clarkson University, Potsdam, New York, January 29, 1990, p. 3.

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